



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Mandela Day on 18 July 2015

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The 18th of July has become known to the country and the rest of the world as the Nelson Mandela International Day. Most of us wonder what we can do on that day. However that should spur each of us towards the spirit of volunteerism deep within ourselves.

Nelson Mandela left a living legacy of volunteerism and service. The Nelson Mandela International Day or Mandela Day is an annual international day in honour of Nelson Mandela and was officially declared by the United Nations in November 2009, with the first UN Mandela Day held on 18 July 2010.

Mandela Day is not meant as a public holiday, but as a day to honour the legacy of the former late South African president and his values through volunteering and community service.

Mr Mandela has spent 67 years and more making the world a better place. Now all that is asked is 67 minutes of our time. Mandela Day is a global call to action that celebrates the idea that each individual has the power to transform the world, the ability to make an impact. The idea is to set aside a day dedicated to the icon that can serve to bring together people around the world to fight poverty and promote peace and reconciliation.

Nelson Mandela Day aims to foster the spirit of Botho/Ubuntu, which emphasises the need by all people of the world to selflessly dedicate their time to implement projects for development and betterment of the lives of ordinary people, especially the needy.

The Department of Water and Sanitation observes Mandela Day every year as part of the country's celebration. The DWS is instilling a culture of giving and doing good unto one another as these were Madiba's values. For instance, the Department of Water and Sanitation has in the past taken part in projects such as erecting 69 resilient structures for the people living on the bank of the Juskei River in Alexandra, north of Johannesburg. The structures benefited 69 families whose homes were on the bank of the Juskei River which made them victims of the recurring floods on many occasions resulting in misery, loss of property and even life.

In conjunction with all events organised by the department we as individuals can lend a helping hand. On that day we can volunteer our time and service, making great and sincere sacrifices for the common good.

These are some of the water services one can think about:

-Start a water harvesting project in your community. Water harvesting is the activity of direct collection of rainwater. It means capturing rain water where it falls or capturing the run off in your own home, village or town.

-Teach water saving tips to your community: educate members of your community about such tips as using a watering can instead of a hose pipe.



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- Adopt-a-river and clean polluted rivers and banks of plastics, tyres, and all other rubble.*
- Repair and clean storm water structures in your local community; these usually get blocked by tyres, mattresses, and all other debris.*
- Take a stroll in your community and note/report water leaks and burst pipes.*
- Fix toilets;*
- *Build a bridge over a stream.*
- Distribute posters and leaflets about water quality issues.*
- Street cleaning and collection of waste.*
- Donate water cans, water tanks and containers to deserving people.*
- Clear a river of evasive alien plants.*
- Create communal gardens: provide water cans and plant vegetable gardens in each yard to alleviate food scarcity.*

Thabang Molai